

# The Colored American

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## A NATIONAL NEGRO NEWSPAPER

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Subscriptions may be sent by postoffice money order, express or by registered letter. All communications for publication should be accompanied with the name of the writer—not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

We solicit news, contributions, opinions and in fact, all matters affecting the race. We will not pay for matter, however, unless it is ordered by us. All matter intended for publication must reach this office by Wednesday of each week to insure insertion in the current issue.

Agents are wanted everywhere. Send or instructions.

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## THE COLORED AMERICAN,

EDWARD E. COOPER, MANAGER

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### OUR WEEKLY TEXT.

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."—Romans xii: 2.

### THE BUSINESS CONFERENCE AT BOSTON.

Much interest is being manifested by the colored people throughout the country in the proposed conference of business men, called by Booker T. Washington to assemble in Boston August 23 and 24. The plan is to draw the strongest commercial factors of the race together and form a National Negro Business League, to stimulate our people everywhere to a keener sense of the importance of a strong financial backing. The details are set forth in a call, printed elsewhere in this issue.

We are, no reason aside from our own indifference and lack of concentration, a cipher in the world of business. The 10,000,000 Afro-Americans, with their remarkable power of production and consumption, should not be content to remain in such a pitiable plight. There is no better time than the present to make a strong move for more favorable conditions. "It is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." Our destiny is our own hands, to make or mar. Mr. Washington with his characteristic foresight and level-headedness, sees our weakness and he is rendering the nation and race an invaluable service in so plainly pointing it out and offering an opportunity to do something definite by way of remedy. His call is timely, its reasoning is unassailable, and the ground he selects for the initial meeting is friendly soil—the very cradle of Negro liberty.

In our opinion, a Negro Business League is an entirely feasible proposition. Considering our disorganized and rambling commercial status, such a combination is a greater necessity with us than it is among the whites, who are always alert to "get together" when the festive dollar is to be cap-

tured. How to buy goods to better advantage, how to secure the largest profit upon a given investment, how to render the most efficient and satisfactory service to patrons at the minimum cost, how to increase the volume of trade and enlarge the scope of operation these are the problems that confront every Negro engaged in business today, and it is because the issues involved are so seldom squarely met and settled, that our commercial pathway is strewn with wrecks and failures of all kinds and the public confidence in our business capacity is at so low an ebb. We need business men of talent, and we need institutions of our own that compete in quantity, quality and price with those of other races and we must have them if we expect to succeed in the remorseless struggle of this unsentimental age.

Every other interest, save that of business, is being cared for by some organization—church, lodge, school, literary and social club, etc. It should now be our aim to strengthen this weak wall—finance and trade—by putting our heads together for the common weal. Cannot every state in the Union send two or more of their representative business men to Boston in August, and form the nucleus of an organization, such as has been described? We see no reason why not—and thousands of arguments why they should do so with the utmost cheerfulness and speed are readily forthcoming.

Mr. Washington does well to impress the idea in his call that this organization is not in opposition to any other now in existence, but it is expected to do a distinct work that no other organization, now in existence, can do as well.

Some friends of the Afro-American Council seem to have conceived the notion that the proposed Business League is to enter the field as a competitor or rival of that very useful and influential organization. There is nothing upon which to hang such a conclusion, as the objects are widely different and the purposes of the two conferences are not at all likely to draw heavily upon the same personnel of the race. To be sure, the Council has a business bureau, but if the director in charge has ever done anything or is likely to do anything to ameliorate the evils now complained of in the business world, the officers of the Council do not seem to be aware of the nature or extent of such operation. Mr. Washington has waited long enough to give this Bureau a chance. The race cannot fritter away any more time and hence demands that something be done—not in opposition—but along lines independent of the possible friction that may grow out of disturbed political conditions of the hour, with which the Council's mission must necessarily deal. The Business League is to be strictly commercial and industrial. The Council deals with protective, legal and educational issues. The line of demarcation is thus too broad for conflict, and there will be none among the sensible element. The points of meeting are far apart and will thus afford opportunities for the attendance of persons in the two localities who could not travel long distances. There is work enough for each, and all the good accomplished will go to elevate the race which we all love, and with which our lot must ever be cast.

Success, say we, to the National Colored Business League, and all other organizations that make for race progress, race solidarity and material and moral prosperity!

### LIEUT. FLIPPER SHOULD BE RESTORED.

The friends of Lieut. Henry O. Flipper, though having met many discouraging rebuffs, have not given up all hope of securing his restoration to the United States army, from which he was summarily and unjustly dismissed some years ago. Memorials are being drafted in several states, and will be presented to the Congressional delegations, with a view of influencing favorable action at the next session. This course is eminently proper and we trust it will prove effective in remedying as gross an outrage as was ever perpetrated upon an army officer. We have never believed that Lieut. Flipper was guilty of any wrong-doing; but had he even committed some technical violation of law, the punishment meted out to him was cruel and unusual. It would be no more than right for Congress now to take the view that he has suffered enough, and vote to give him back as far as possible the clean record that was and is his by every natural right. Our people should work on their congressmen in the several districts and try to do their best to help Lieut. Flipper's just cause.

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MASTERS.

The two stellar musical events of the season—the artistic production of "The Pirates of Penzance," by Director J. H. Lewis, and the thorough performance of the Washington permanent chorus and concert band, under the leadership of Mr. Elzie S. Hoffman, awakened this city anew to its marvelous possibilities in the realm of first-class music. These gentlemen have worked hard and successfully in the interest of Negro development, but their financial returns have been light when the value of the service is calmly considered. No other men here could have done so well, and few would have attempted such stupendous tasks. We are proud of them and glory in the fact that they are to remain for further usefulness in the National Capitol.

Professors Lewis and Hoffman deserve the unqualified thanks of Washington's cultured populace and when ever they offer a program, no one should be churlish enough to fail to buy a ticket to guarantee a financial result commensurate with the artistic side they are sure to present.

Director of the Census, W. R. Merriam, is coming up to the reasonable expectations of those who stood between him and his colored detractors a few months ago. Gov. Merriam is a business man of the most thorough type and settles each question of patronage and discipline in the proper order—never hurried by clamor or delayed by criticism. He is giving the country its most complete census, and, what comes near to our hearts, he has called a small army of Afro-Americans to assist him. Gov. Merriam and his splendid corps of statisticians and executives like Messrs M'Cauley, Langley, Barrows, Powers, North, Newcomb, Wilcox, Kent and Patterson, will live long in the memory of our people.

The selection of Prof. George W. Cook as a member of the new Board of Charities was a most fitting one, and meets with general approval. He is an ardent worker in the cause of humanity and has sound views in educational matters. The professor is a man of fine intellectual attainments and has for years held a responsible position in the faculty of Howard University. White and black alike respect him for his character and work.

### Get a home.

The intelligence, wealth and character of the Negro race has ever been on the side of republicanism.

What is the national democracy doing, or even saying to invite the support of a single colored voter?

It is unfortunate that such a few Negroes ally themselves with the democratic party until they have outlived their usefulness in the republican fold.

It our police wish to earn a vote of thanks from those who are obliged to live in densely populated sections of the city, they will insist that women who must rubberneck out of windows take the dirty handkerchiefs off of their heads.

America doesn't need an influx of Boers. Ben Tillman is about all we can digest of that particular brand of tyrant.

Silence is the most effective answer to the well-meaning idiot who insists upon gabbling long and loud upon the things he is least informed about.

Brains transform the barber into a "tonsorial artist," a farm hand into a "landscape gardener," a dressmaker into a "modiste," and an old fashioned farmer into an "agriculturist." Put brains into the ordinary occupations, and give them their real dignity.

Encouraging as the republican outlook is today, we respectfully suggest to Chairman Hanna the advisability of keeping an eye on the quiet and highly intelligent Negro vote in New York, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia and Michigan.

The Washington Times, taking on some "hot air" enthusiasm the other day, rises up in all its editorial grandeur, and calls the Hon. James L. Norris a plain, ordinary, unmodified "liar." Are we to have an injection of "yellow journalism" hereabouts?

A patent medicine which fails to effect the cures claimed for it by the manufacturers is called a fraud. The civil service law which doesn't reform a single abuse that its promoters contend that it was designed to do, cannot escape a like characterization.

The civil service law may keep good men out of the government's employ, but it doesn't of itself keep good men in. If influence is to be the main-spring of political office, why cumber our system with the useless and roundabout civil service machinery?

Notwithstanding the alleged heat at the Census Office, no one has been led to resign on account of it, and we are personally acquainted with a large number of very capable individuals who are willing and anxious to take a few chances with the aforesaid studious temperature.

The "regular" republicans went to Philadelphia and had an inning of party birthday anniversary. The democrats and silver republicans gathered at Kansas City, and added gaiety to the nation's birthday. But the perennial Washington school teacher hies herself to the seaside, and declines to discuss birthdays at all. Ancient questions have no abiding place in their repertoire.